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MEMORANDUM

TO: Outer Cape Lobster Management Area Permit Holders

FROM: Paul Diodati, Director

DATE: August 15, 2003

SUBJECT: Outer Cape Effort Control Proposal Public Hearing - September 24

The Division of Marine Fisheries (*MarineFisheries*) will be holding a public hearing on Wednesday, September 24 (7PM at the Forestdale School, 151 Route 130) to propose final rules for the Outer Cape Lobster Conservation Area for 2004. *MarineFisheries* has decided not to implement a state-wide commercial lobster effort control plan, however, Massachusetts is mandated under the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American lobster to reduce traps by 25% in Outer Cape Cod (OCC) by 2008, and a plan must be enacted by January 1, 2004.

MarineFisheries will propose two alternative effort control plans for OCC: the ASMFC approved plan, part of Addendum III to Amendment 3 and an alternative plan that is a version of *MarineFisheries*' state-wide plan. Both documents are enclosed along with a comparison of the two proposed plans and are also available on our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries. After public hearings, the state's Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission will approve a final plan in October that will be implemented in time for the 2004 fishing year.

Permit holders who have no history of trap fishing in OCC during the specified eligibility period would not receive an allocation for traps in 2004 and beyond under either of these plans.

For further information please contact Melanie Griffin at 617.626.1528.